CLEVELAND COBRAS

COBRA NEWS

CLEVELAND PROFESSIONAL SOCCER, INC.

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PROFILE: HERBIE HALLER

The Cleveland Cobras' head coach, Herbie Haller, is one of those quiet individuals, much like former U.C.L.A. basketball mentor John Wooten, whose temperament really does not seem to make him an ideal candidate for the head coach of a professional soccer team.

Like most cliches, this one also has become overworked and proved to be fallacious. Herbie Haller became the A.S.L.'s coach of the year in his first season of professional coaching.

"I don't think that my temperament hinders my performance as a coach. When I yell, my players know that I mean business. Some coaches scream all the time and the players learn to just block them out," commented Haller.

Haller moved to Cleveland in 1956 when his family immigrated from Yugoslavia. Haller was a highly regarded player while living in Europe as he toiled for Lintz(Austria) SV Stickstoff, a first division team.
After moving to Cleveland, Haller attended Fenn College(now Cleveland State University) and became a sensational performer on the area's soccer fields. He represented Ohio in the 1968 United States National Team Tryouts.

"Trying out with the national team was one of my greatest thrills. That, and winning the division title with the Cobras last season," said Haller.

Haller's active career came to an abrupt end in 1970 as his knees were

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no longer able to withstand the constant pressure of sprints up and down the 120 yard playing field.

Before copping the Cobras' coaching job, Haller transformed a floundering soccer program at Cleveland's Baldwin Wallace College into a respectable squad with a .500 record in only one year. After his success on the collegiate scene, Cobras' president, Howard Collier, tabbed him to become the Cobras' head man.

"We chose Herbie because he is quite competent as his playing and coaching careers indicated. Also, he shares our philosophy of building a champion team composed of American players," said Collier.

"The future of soccer in the U.S. lies in the necessity of assimilating American players into the game. It is the only course that soccer can take," affirmed Haller.

Haller stressed defense and finesse with his young Cobras and this emphasis led them to their first A.S.L. title. Yes, Cleveland's quiet man did quite well for someone whose personality was not supposed to lend itself to this position. Ah, but cliches usually do not amount to a hill of beans.

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